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ABSTRACT

This glossary defines terms commonly used in second language education, including the subfields of foreign language education, bilingual education, and English as a second language. Its purpose is to minimize confusion about the use of the terms. The terms include: language/linguistic majority student; language/linguistic minority student; limited English proficient; non-English proficient; English-only; fluent English proficient; English as a second language (ESL); English as a foreign language (EFL); bilingual education; transitional bilingual program; maintenance bilingual program; pull-out program; foreign language in the elementary school (FLES); foreign language experience (FLEX); immersion education; early partial immersion; delayed immersion; late immersion; double immersion; structured immersion; two-way bilingual immersion; sheltered instruction; the Natural Approach; Community Language Learning (CLL) or Counseling Learning; Total Physical Response (TPR); Suggestopedia; Silent Way; and content-based instruction. (MSE)

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COMMON TERMS
IN SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Marguerite Ann Snow

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CLEAR

CENTER FOR LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

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Center for Language Education and Research

The Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR) is funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) to carry out a set of research and professional development activities relevant to the education of limited English proficient students and foreign language students. Located at the University of California, Los Angeles, CLEAR also has branches at the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C., Yale University, Harvard University, and the University of California, Santa Barbara.

CLEAR believes that working toward a language-competent society should be among our nation's highest educational priorities. Thus, CLEAR is committed to assisting both non-native and native speakers of English to develop a high degree of academic proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing in English and a second or native language. To work toward this goal, CLEAR has united researchers from education, linguistics, psychology, anthropology, and sociology with practitioners, parents, and community agencies.

A coordinated set of research, instructional improvement, community involvement, and dissemination activities are oriented around three major themes: (a) improving the English proficiency and academic content knowledge of language minority students; (b) strengthening second language capacities through improved teaching and learning of foreign languages; and (c) improving research and practice in educational programs that jointly meet the needs of language minority and majority students.

The CLEAR Educational Report Series is designed for practitioners and laypersons interested in issues in second language education and foreign language teaching and research.

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A newcomer to second language education is immediately struck by the plethora of terminology used by practitioners and researchers alike to define program types, describe teaching methods, or classify students. Likewise, seasoned veterans of the field are also faced with a barrage of newly-created acronyms and labels with which they must become familiar. Moreover, even terms which have been around for longer periods of time are often used inconsistently and imprecisely. This report is intended to minimize the confusion surrounding certain common terms in second language education. It proposes to define a set of terms which reflects shared beliefs from a variety of areas in second language education, including foreign language education, bilingual education, and English as a Second Language. Selection of the terms was based on their widespread use in the field and their importance in understanding essential aspects of second language education. The goal of this report is to promote clarity and consistency in our own use of terminology at CLEAR and to encourage others working in the field of second language education to do so as well.

Learner Characteristics

Language majority student/Linguistic majority student - A learner whose native language is the language of the majority group of a country, (e.g., English speakers in the United States.)

Language minority student/Linguistic minority student - A learner who speaks the language of a minority group of a country, (e.g., Spanish or Korean speakers in the United States).

Limited English Proficient (LEP) - A learner from any language background who has limited speaking skills in English as a second language (formerly referred to as LES - limited English speaker).

Non-English Proficient (NEP) - A learner who has no previous experience learning English and who comes to school speaking only the home language (formerly referred to as NES - non English speaker).

English-only (EO) - A learner who is a monolingual English speaker.

Fluent English Proficient (FEP) - A learner who speaks both English and another language at home who either comes into the school system as a fluent speaker of English or has been reclassified from LEP at some point during elementary school. There is no need for special instruction in the former case (e.g., an American-born Chinese student who speaks English and Cantonese at home with bilingual family members) and no longer a need for special instruction in the latter (e.g., a Spanish-speaking student who can now function in an all English classroom).

Second Language Educational Approaches

English as a Second Language (ESL) - The teaching of English to speakers of other languages in settings where either English is the medium of instruction in the schools, the media of television, radio, and newspapers, and the language of the majority (e.g., English in the United States), or where English has been designated as an official language of government or education (e.g., English in the Philippines; English in Hong Kong; English in South Africa).

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) - The teaching of English to speakers of other languages in which English is taught as subject in school and exposure to the language is typically confined to the instructional setting (e.g., English in the People's Republic of China).

Bilingual Education - In general terms, instruction which is available to any language group in more than one language in an educational setting. In practice in the United States, however, it is generally an approach to the education of language minority students in which a certain amount of instruction is provided through the child's primary language while he/she acquires sufficient English skills to compete academically. Bilingual programs which seek to enrich a learner's linguistic repertoire by the addition of a second language while promoting and supporting the native language are often referred to as "additive" programs.

In contrast, programs which are designed to teach a second language as a replacement for the native language are considered "subtractive" bilingual programs. Certain instructional programs have also been referred to as "submersion" or "sink or swim" since they offer no special programs to aid students in learning the second language.

At the program level, bilingual education programs tend to fall into three categories:

Transitional Bilingual Program - The most common form of bilingual education program for language minority students in the United States. The ultimate goal of this kind of program is the rapid development of English language skills. Subject matter is initially taught in the home language until the second language (English) is developed enough for students to participate in the regular classroom. Students receive special ESL instruction to speed up the acquisition of English.

Maintenance Bilingual Program - A bilingual program which has as a major instructional objective the development of literacy skills in the home language in addition to mastery of English.

Pull-out Program - A type of program used in both elementary and secondary schools in the U.S. in settings where many different language groups exist in the same class. The ESL students are "pulled out" of regular (all English) classrooms for special instruction in English. This instruction is

usually provided by a teacher trained in ESL methodology who uses materials specially designed for ESL students. While technically this type of program cannot be considered a true bilingual program since only one language (English) is used for instruction, ESL pull-out programs are typically included among approaches to bilingual education.

Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) - A popular foreign language teaching approach in the 1950s and 60s which was based on the audio-lingual method. In the 1970s and 80s the approach is often referred to as "revitalized" FLES. Revitalized FLES classes are usually offered before, during, or after school for a specified number of days a week. There is generally an emphasis on development of second language speaking and listening skills and on building cultural awareness. Limited amounts of reading and writing activities are included in some programs.

Foreign Language Experience (FLEX) - An approach to foreign language instruction in the elementary school which is designed to provide a general exposure to the foreign language and culture and to introduce students to words, phrases, and simple conversations in the foreign language. The main objectives of a FLEX class are to: a) develop listening skills which can provide a foundation for future language study, and b) to add a cultural enrichment component to the elementary school curriculum. Intensity of instruction is generally less than in a FLES program and the

objectives are, therefore, more limited.

Immersion Education - A model of bilingual education first implemented in Canada in 1965 in which language majority students receive most of the standard elementary school curriculum through the medium of a second language. The traditional total immersion program begins in kindergarten or first grade with 100% of the school day devoted to instruction in the second language. The students' first language is generally introduced in grade three for reading and language arts instruction, and then gradually used for subject-matter instruction until an approximate 50/50 split in first language and second language instruction exists at the end of elementary school. Immersion programs have been established in a number of different second languages (e.g., French, Spanish, German, Cantonese) and with diverse ethnic groups in Canada and the United States.

Since 1965, several variants of the total immersion model have been developed. Among these variations are:

Early Partial Immersion - A program in which less than 100% of curriculum instruction during the primary grades is presented in the second language. The amount of second language instruction varies from program to program, but 50% first language instruction and 50% second language instruction is the most common formula. Reading is generally taught

in both languages from the first grade.

Delayed Immersion - A variation of the immersion model in which the second language is not used as a medium of instruction in elementary school until grades four or five. Accordingly, students in delayed immersion programs learn to read in their first language. Often students in delayed immersion programs receive some second language instruction earlier in elementary school when the second language is taught as a school subject (e.g., French as a second language).

Late Immersion - A type of immersion in which intensive use of the second language does not occur until the end of elementary school (grade 6) or the beginning of secondary school. Late immersion students usually receive some second language instruction in the earlier grades, but the second language is not used as the medium of instruction for subjects in the regular school curriculum.

Double Immersion - An immersion program which employs two non-native languages as the media of instruction during the elementary grades. The two languages are usually selected for their sociocultural significance, perhaps one for economic or social benefits, and the other for its religious or cultural importance. Double immersion programs can be classified as early if they begin in the primary grades or

delayed if instruction in the two languages is held off until the upper elementary grades.

More recently, the assumptions of the immersion model have been applied to instructional programs for teaching language minority students in the United States. The two types of programs described below are beginning to receive a lot of attention.

Structured Immersion - A variation of the traditional immersion program which is designed for language minority students, rather than language majority students. In a structured immersion program, language minority students receive all subject-matter instruction in their second language. For example, LEP students from a Spanish-speaking home background receive all school instruction in English. Structured immersion differs from "submersion" programs in that instruction is planned so that all communication is at a level the second language learner can understand. Students are allowed to use the home language in class, however, the teacher (who is typically bilingual) uses only English.

Two-way Bilingual Immersion - A bilingual program designed to serve both the language majority and language minority student concurrently. In this type of program, two language groups are purposefully mixed in the same classroom. In the lower elementary grades, all content instruction takes place in the home language

of the language minority student (e.g., Spanish) with a short period devoted to oral English. In the upper elementary grades, approximately half the curriculum is taught in the home language and half in English. In this type of bilingual program, then, English-only students learn Spanish, for example, as a foreign language while continuing to develop their native English language skills and LEP students learn English as a second language while becoming literate in their native language. The two-way approach provides excellent opportunities for use of "Cooperative Learning" techniques to encourage students of diverse language and ethnic groups to work together on problem-solving and interactional activities and for students to serve as peer models. The goals of a two-way language program are for both groups to become bilingual, succeed academically, and develop positive inter-group relations.

Sheltered Instruction - refers to a classroom set-up where second language learners are separated or segregated from native speakers of the target language for purposes of language instruction (ESL) and often for selected content subjects (e.g., physical education, music, art, etc.). In this way, instruction can be geared to the students' level of proficiency and accommodations made to maximize comprehension.

Some Popular Second Language Teaching Methods

The Natural Approach - A methodology which can be applied to second language or foreign language teaching contexts for child-

ren, adolescents, or adults at the beginning level. The Natural Approach focuses on teaching communicative skills, both oral and written. The method is based primarily on Krashen's theory of language acquisition (specifically, on five hypotheses: the Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis; the Monitor Hypothesis; the Natural Order Hypothesis; the Input Hypothesis; and the Affective Filter Hypothesis).

Community Language Learning (CLL) or Counseling Learning - A method of second and foreign language teaching in which small or large groups are formed to create a language learning community. In this method, learners' personal feelings and reactions to the language learning situation are an integral part of the learning process. During class sessions, learners decide what they want to talk about. The teacher, taking on the role of "counselor", translates these topics into the target language with the learner repeating the content to other group members. CLL is a learner-centered method which emphasizes the humanistic side of language learning.

Total Physical Response (TPR) - A language teaching method based on the value of the link between speech and physical action for maximizing comprehension and on the benefit of physical activity for reducing stress in language learning. The content of a TPR lesson is a series of commands, orders, or instructions given by the teacher. Students are expected to respond to these orders

with the appropriate physical behaviors (e.g., Teacher tells students "Stand up!" Students, either individually or as a group, stand up).

Suggestopedia - A method of foreign language teaching which utilizes dialogue, situations, and translation to present and practice language. Language acquisition and recall abilities are maximized through techniques which attempt to alter the learner's state of consciousness and concentration through positive messages that the learners can successfully learn the second language. Central to the method is the use of music, visual images, and relaxation exercises aimed at making language learning less anxiety-provoking.

Silent Way - A method designed to give students the tools to develop independence and responsibility in language learning. A unique feature of the method is the relative silence of the teacher who makes use of gestures, mime, visual aids, wall charts, and extensive use of wooden rods (cuisenaire rods) to present and illustrate linguistic features of the second language. As Gattegno, the founder of the method, says, "The teacher works with the student; the student works on the language." Although the roles of the teacher and learner in the Silent Way are quite unlike more traditional approaches, the presentation of language material generally follows a traditional structural (form-based) syllabus. Pronunciation is stressed from the beginning since the

sounds of the language are considered the basic building blocks of language learning. All four skills are also worked on from the beginning.

Content-based Instruction - An approach which relies on the specification of learner needs (vocational, occupational, academic) in syllabus design. In contrast to a form-based syllabus (where grammar structures are central) or a functional syllabus (in which "functions" such as inviting, asking directions, etc. are considered basic), a content-based syllabus employs subject-matter content as the point of departure for the language class. The adjunct model is a good example of content-based program design. In this instructional model, typically used at the secondary and post-secondary levels, a content course is taught in conjunction with a language course. In this way, the syllabi of the two courses can be coordinated and students can be prepared for the academic demands (e.g., writing requirements and reading assignments) of the content course in the language class. In this method, the subject matter of the content course becomes the content for the language class, thus increasing the relevance of the language class in the minds of the students. Since adjunct courses are often designed to serve the academic or vocational language needs of language minority students, they are often a kind of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course.

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